

Own Weapon Hit Nixon, Ex-Aide Says

Cuban Invasion Plans Kept Secret for Security: Klein

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (AP)—Richard M. Nixon's former press secretary said yesterday that Nixon's desire to keep the secret of Cuban invasion plans caused him to be "clubbed" by President Kennedy in the 1960 campaign.

Herbert G. Klein, press secretary for Nixon during the 1960 presidential campaign and now editor of the San Diego Union, said Nixon had wanted to make Cuban intervention a campaign issue but did not do so for security reasons.

When Kennedy came out for Cuban intervention, Klein said, "The effect was that in a crucial period of the campaign Mr. Nixon was being clubbed with his own weapon. And, because he had a strong sense of responsibility to protect security, he had no choice but to attack Kennedy — and against a policy he previously had advocated himself."

KLEIN'S VERSION of the incident appeared in Sunday editions of The Union.

He called it a "story we of the Nixon staff couldn't tell during the 1960 campaign."

"It is the story of the Cuban issue," he said, "which the former vice president has discussed briefly in his new book, 'Six Crises,' and which was disputed this past week by the President."

Klein said four members of Nixon's staff knew refugees were being trained for an assault upon Cuba.

"Frequently we debated among ourselves the handling of the Cuban issue within security bounds," he said.

"We heard the rumor the Kennedy staff feared the assault would take place during the election. We suspected the reason why, Oct. 20, Kennedy proposed direct intervention."

FOR THE vice president and his staff, the angriest moments of the campaign took place on Oct. 20 on the eve of the fourth television debate (between Nixon and Kennedy). We were in New York when Mr. Kennedy, late in the day, made a proposal which directly outlined the exact program which was being carried out—and which we had, for security reasons, kept secret.

Here is what we thought had happened:

"First: On July 23 Allen Dulles then head of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Mr. Kennedy had concurred in announcing that he had been briefed in depth, with particular emphasis on Cuba and Africa. Nothing was withheld, the two told reporters. And we knew that this was in accord with orders given Mr. Dulles by President Eisenhower."

"Second: Nixon had captured the initiative on the Cuban issue with his blunt statement urging a quarantine against Castro. And, in the best co-ordinated part of the campaign the administration had followed with quick orders putting that into effect."

"IT SEEMED obvious to us that Mr. Kennedy was striking back after realizing he was losing points at a crucial point of the campaign. He was striking back with secret material he had been given at the Dulles briefing. The White House was moved and we were told Mr. Kennedy had been informed about troop training. Others told us President Eisenhower was angry over the disclosure."

"In the light of what I know of happenings at that time, I was, of course, surprised last week at Mr. Dulles' statement which corroborates President Kennedy's position that he wasn't told about the troop training."

In a statement earlier this week Dulles said, "My briefings were intelligence briefings on the world's own governments' plans or programs for action, overt or covert."

Dulles declined further comment yesterday.